

III

TWO NOTES ON THE BUDDHA-CARITA.

By K. WATANABE.¹

1. A PROSE TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE BUDDHA-CARITA EXISTING IN CHINESE.

A WORK entitled *Fo-chui-pān-ni-phān-liao-shwo-kiao-ki-king* (Sūtra of teaching spoken briefly by the Buddha just before his attaining Parinirvāṇa), is one of the most popular sūtras in China and Japan. The sūtra was translated by the famous Kumārajīva, and is mentioned in Nanjio's so-called "Catalogue of the Tripiṭaka" (No. 122). It is commonly called *Fo-i-kiao-king* (Sūtra of the Buddha's last teaching), according to its shortened title.

The importance of this small sūtra in Buddhist history is sufficiently indicated by the fact, that the great Chinese emperor Thai-tsung, of the Thang-dynasty, issued a special edict to propagate this sūtra, in order to regulate the conduct of Buddhist monks through its teaching. Even in modern Japan, the sūtra is solemnly recited by almost all Buddhist sects. An English translation was published by Rev. K. Nukariya, but this version has had only a limited circulation. A revised translation of the Sutra

¹ This article reached me just too late for insertion in the last journal, 1909. The author, who has now left Strassburg, and whose address in Japan we do not know, has not seen a proof of this article.—R.H. D.

into some European tongue is wanted, owing to the high ethical value of the treatise.

Now this important Sūtra is, in fact, a prose translation of the Mahāparinirvāṇa-sarga in the Buddha-Carita. The following table will clearly prove this fact :

Fo-i-kiao-king.	Dharmarakṣa's Translation of the Buddha-Carita, Chap. XXVI.	Beal's Translation, S. B. E. XIX, p. 290 <i>seq.</i>	Pao-yun's Translation, Chap. XXIX.
	Ver. 1 - 33a	Ver. 1984 - 2016a	Ver. 1 - 30
Sec. 1. Introduction	33b- 34	2016b-2017	31
2. Commandment	35 - 44	2018 -2027	32 - 42
3. Subduing mind	45 - 52	2028 -2035	43 - 49
4. Measured nourishment	53 - 56a	2036 -2039a	50 - 52
5. Proper sleep	56b- 62	2039b-2045	53 - 58
6. Anger	63 - 67	2046 -2050	59 - 63
7. Pride	68 - 71	2051 -2054	64 - 65
8. Honesty	72 - 73a	2055 -2056a	66
9. Small desire	73b- 76a	2056b-2059a	67
10. Contentedness	76b- 81a	2059b-2064a	68 - 69
11. Secluded life	81b- 84a	2064b-2067a	70 - 71
12. Diligence	84b- 86	2067b-2069	72 - 74
13. Samādhi	87 - 91a	2070 -2074a	75 - 78
14. Wisdom	91b- 96a	2074b-2079a	79 - 81
15. Single mind	96b- 98	2079b-2081	82
16. Carelessness	99 -104	2082 -2087	83 - 88
17. Anuruddha and Buddha	105 -111	2088 -2094	89 - 95
18. Conclusion	112 -119a	2095 -2102a	96 -102b
	119b-131	2102b-2114	102b-126

A commentary on this sūtra is mentioned in Nanjio's "Catalogue" (No. 1,209). The text in this commentary is entirely taken from the translation by Kumārajīva. The work is ascribed to Vasubandhu and the translation to Paramārtha. But the accuracy of this tradition is very doubtful, as is shown by the following statement in the *Cung-king-mulu* (Nanjio, No. 1,603), fasc. 5 :

"I-kiao-king-lung, one volume : it is said that this śāstra was translated by Paramārtha. But the work is not mentioned in the Catalogue of Translations by Paramārtha. Therefore it is now registered under 'doubtful translations.'"

The authorship of the work is also very uncertain. In a Chinese commentary on the śāstra by Tsin-yuen (Nanjio, No. 1,597 ; vide *ibid.*, p. 465), the work is ascribed to Aśvaghōṣa. This apparently shows that the authorship was invented in China, and it suggests to us that the work might have been compiled by an Indian or Chinese monk,

based on the translation by Kumārajīva—perhaps by Paramārtha himself, for he wrote many commentaries on several sūtras and śāstras according to the description of the *Li-tai-san-pao-ki* (Nanjio, No. 1504), fasc. 17.

2. THE BUDDHA-CARITA AND THE MĀRKAṆḌEYA-PURĀṆA.

In the Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa there is a famous story regarding King Hariścandra. In the conclusion of this story a battle between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra is described. The two Brahmins fight a furious single combat, each assuming the form of a bird.

I will borrow here the passage from an English translation by Mr. M. N. Dutt :¹

“ And in accordance with each other's curse, both Vasiṣṭha and the highly energetic Viśvāmitra, the son of Kuśika, although endowed with great effulgence, came from inferior births. Although born of different species, they, both of incomparable energy and endowed with mighty strength and prowess, being greatly enraged, fought with each other. O Brahmin, the *Āri*,² was two thousand yojanas high, and the heron (*Vaka*) was three thousand and ninety-six yojanas high. Endowed with great strength, they, striking each other with their wings, created exceeding fear in creatures.”

Aśvaghōṣa alludes to this story in a chapter of his Buddha-Carita, in which several examples, from Brahmanic literature are given. The following passage is taken from a Chinese translation of the Buddha-Carita by Dharmarakṣa (Nanjio, No. 1,351). Its corresponding English rendering is selected from Beal's *Fo-sho-hing-tsang-king* (S.B.E.,

¹ *Wealth of India* Series, Calcutta, 1897, p. 50. See also Pargiter's translation, 1904, p. 60; and the Sanskrit text published by K. M. Banerjea, 1862, p. 90.

² Perhaps *Āri* is a better reading: the Sanskrit text, as well as Pargiter's translation, read *Āṇi*; and in other MSS. it is written *Āti* or *Āṇi*.

vol. xix., p. 330), in which I have corrected two important names, indicating the Purāṇic story.

“The two demons, *Āri* (or *Āḍi*) and *Vaka*, were ever drawn into contention; in the first place, because of their folly and ignorance causing wide ruin among men; how much less for our all-wise master should we begrudge our lives.” The perpetual contention and enmity between *Vasiṣṭha* and *Viśvāmitra* is a well-known story in the *Mahābhārata*.

In another translation of the *Buddha-Carita* by Pāo-yun (Nanjio, No. 1323, chap. 30, verses 67, 68), the passage is somewhat different. This translation is, in general, very obscure and clumsy compared with the translation by Dharmarakṣa. The passage is, in English, as follows:

“In ancient times there were ignorant persons; through their folly they struggled like water-animals (?); from their intensity of ignorance they destroyed each other. Buddha appeared in the world to remove all ignorance; why shall we foolishly covet our present lives for Buddha?”

The phrase “struggled like water animals,” or “struggling water-animals,” is a very difficult one. But I venture to suppose that it is merely a mistaken translation for *ariva-koca*, or something like that. *Ari*, or *Āri*, may be here wrongly translated as “struggled” or “struggling,” as *ari* means hostile, and is so rendered in Dutt’s translation. *Vaka* is, perhaps, the source of “water-animal,” as the ideograph commonly used for it in Chinese means “insect,” though it is sometimes applied to animal or creature.